

Last night, the U.S. House of Representatives passed an amendment authored by Congressman John Barrow (GA-12) that would prioritize funding for the Law Enforcement Support Center (LESC), an organization that helps identify and deport illegal immigrants. Barrow offered the amendment to H.R. 2017, the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act of 2012.

The LESC aids local law enforcement by serving as a repository of information regarding the immigration status of illegal immigrants suspected, arrested, or convicted of criminal activity. In FY 2010, the LESC fielded over 1 million requests for information from local law enforcement, and that number is expected to increase given recent changes to state immigration laws.

[WATCH CONGRESSMAN BARROW on the House floor \(click here\).](#)

A longtime advocate of beefing up our border security and preventing illegal immigration, Barrow recently visited the U.S.-Mexico border to assess firsthand our border security operations and ongoing efforts to combat illegal immigration into the United States. Upon returning from the trip, Barrow remarked: "Our capabilities have evolved and our operations are working, but clearly there's more that can be done to better secure our borders and crack down on illegal immigration. I will continue working with my colleagues to see that our patrolmen and women have the equipment and resources they need to get the job done."

Below is a transcript of the remarks Congressman Barrow made on the House floor last night in support of his amendment:

Mr. Chairman,

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I recently returned from a trip to our Southern border at the invitation of our colleague Gabrielle Giffords. While I think it's fair to say that advances have been made since my most recent trip to the border in 2007, I feel it's also necessary to report that significant challenges remain.

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Successful border security requires a multi-pronged strategy. We need the physical presence of boots on the ground. We need to enforce the laws on the books to deny benefits to those who are here illegally. And we need to identify illegal immigrants who may pose a serious risk to public safety or national security and deport them.

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One of our main tools in identifying those public safety risks is the Law Enforcement Support Center or LESC. The LESC serves as a clearinghouse for local law enforcement officials, providing real-time information and help on immigration status of illegal immigrants suspected, arrested, or convicted of criminal activity.

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In FY 2010, the LESC fielded over 1 million requests for information from local law enforcement and recent changes to state law will surely increase those requests. My amendment expresses the intent of Congress to prioritize LESC funding, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

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